Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC)
Frequently Asked Questions

Q.   What is a TWIC?

A.   TWIC is an acronym for Transportation Worker Identification Credential. TSA will test a system-wide common credential that would be used across all transportation modes, for all personnel requiring unescorted physical and/or logical (cyber) access to secure areas of the national transportation system.

       TWIC is being developed in response to threats and vulnerabilities identified in the transportation system, and in accordance with the spirit and requirements of the USA PATRIOT Act, the Aviation and Transportation Security Act, and the Maritime Transportation Security Act.

       The TWIC will positively tie the person -- to the credential -- to the threat assessment, and can be used in conjunction with access control to critical components of the Nation's transportation infrastructure.

Q.   Where is TSA at in the process of issuing TWICs to transportation workers?

A.   In early August TSA announced the awarding of a contract to BearingPoint, Inc. to assist in the Prototype phase of the program. The Prototype is the third phase of the program and follows the successful completion of the planning and technology evaluation phases in 2003. The goal of the seven-month Prototype is to assess the performance of the conceptual TWIC identity management business processes.

Q.   Where will the Prototype take place?

A.   The Prototype will be conducted at 40+ locations in the geographical areas of Los Angeles/Long Beach, Wilmington/Philadelphia and Florida's deepwater ports. Participation is voluntary for the Prototype; examples of participants include truckers, longshoremen, and container terminal and airport personnel.

Q.   Will transportation workers who get the TWIC have a background check?

A.   Florida, in coordination with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, will continue to conduct fingerprint-based background checks in accordance with law governing the state's uniform port access credentials. The Prototype Phase will conduct name-based terrorist threat assessments for all volunteers to ensure that a TWIC is not issued to a known or suspected terrorist.

       If the TWIC is approved for implementation, the card will be issued only to individuals who have successfully cleared the background check process. The process will include a check to ensure the TWIC applicant is not a known or suspected terrorist.

Q.   How will the process work?

A.   For the Florida Prototype the process will work as follows. 1) TSA will set up enrollment centers and accept applications for the card online. 2) Once the application is completed, the State of Florida will conduct a background check on the individual, and collect a fee. Note: Fee is for background check only during Prototype. 3) Once the background check is completed and the enrollee is cleared, TSA will complete the application process, then produce and issue a card to the individual.

The process for the Prototype at sites on the East and West coasts will be similar, but will not include fee collection or a background check.

Q.   Will a non-U.S. citizen be able to get a TWIC?

A.   Yes. Transportation workers participating in the Prototype Phase who are not citizens, but have a legal presence in the U.S. may apply for a TWIC.

Q.   What Technologies will be used?

A.   Phase II, the Technology Evaluation Phase was completed in October 2003 in the Philadelphia/Delaware River Basin and Los Angeles/Long Beach areas.

Technologies tested included:
1. Optical (laser) Memory Strip
2. Integrated Circuit Chips (ICC)
3. Magnetic Stripe
4. 2-D Bar Code
5. Linear Bar Code
6. Digital Photograph

Q.   Why were LA, Delaware River Basin, and Florida selected?

A.   The participating Prototype locations on the East and West coasts were selected primarily based on the fact that they (1) volunteered, (2) previously participated in Phase II (Technology Evaluation), (3) were in close proximity to an existing Phase II facility or region, and (4) represented a mode of transportation that was necessary to fully test and evaluate the TWIC system during the Prototype Phase. Florida's participation resulted from Florida statute 311.12 and 311.125 (2003), and as a result of an agreement between TSA and Florida to collaborate to help address our mutual security requirements.

Q.   I assume workers will use existing IDs until they get the TWIC. Is that correct?

A.   Yes.